Two Dollars a Year

50c. a Number

University of Alberta Library
0 1620 2789945 7

OTTAWA
PUBLIC LIBRARY

CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE

Jul 1852 1

ESTABLISHED 1936

PS
8273
C512
v.15:no.2
1951

Augustana

No. 2 TORONTO, ONT. WINTER, 1951

EX LIBRIS
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTENSIS

"S… on
pedest… fore
it lear… ngle
to pou… ning
low. … test
Canad… by
which … the
power of verbal expression.

In the same magazine, J. L. Smallwood describes an awe-inspiring sight that few now living have ever seen, a buffalo herd thundering across the plains: "They wheel, gale-riven clouds in lumbering, streaming rout, heads back and horns flat like the flukes of an anchor." But everybody is at times "A Watcher Of Stars", and Violet Olasovetz brightens the imagination with her lines:

"Let me be a watcher of stars,
On lonely nights when the thin moon
Slides like a scimitar through the clouds
And cuts showers of star-fire loose from the sky."

Any collection of good poetry can enrich the reader's experience and illuminate his understanding. Canadian Poetry Magazine is concerned mainly with Canadian writers, both those of established reputation like Wilson MacDonald, Audrey Alexandra Brown, or Charles Bruce, and those of whom the public has not yet heard. Among Ottawans recently represented in its pages are Geoffrey Vivien, F. E. Hanratty, and Hilda Ridley. But its scope is not narrowly nationalist, for it includes poems by Americans like Joseph Keith, William Rose Benet, and Gustav Davidson and by Britons like Geoffrey Johnson.

The magazine restricts itself to poems never published before. But its standard is meritorious and it "aims to preserve a sane balance between tradition and experiment." Its encouragement of writers is enhanced by payment for their work.

Despite freshness and interest of material, the magazine has been kept alive for 13 years only by the financial aid of the Canadian Authors Association and the Foundation Supporters. It has been assured quality and prestige by distinguished editors—E. J. Pratt, Watson Kirkconnell, Earle Birney, and now Arthur S. Bourinot. Its contents can give pleasure to many readers who may not as yet be acquainted with them."

—An Editorial in the Ottawa Citizen reprinted in the Montreal Gazette.

"The sad fact that our Canadian Poetry Magazine keeps alive only by the skin of its teeth makes me wish that every man in this room would get acquainted with that quarterly and help the world to understand that there are new voices in this new country that are worth listening to."

—From an address by the late Arthur Stringer.

CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE

677 DUNDAS STREET WEST ($2.00 a year
TORONTO, ONTARIO 50 cents a copy)

ENCLOSED FIND THE
SUM OF.....

Subscription to Canadian Poetry Magazine for.....year.

Commencing.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CANADIAN POETRY

PERIODICAL PR
CANADIAN POETRY
DATE: Winter/37

McLaughlin

OSHAWA
PUBLIC LIBRARY

PLEASE KEEP CARDS IN POCKET

Published by
THE CANADIAN AUTHORS ASSOCIATION

Canadian Poetry Magazine

A quarterly magazine, published by the Canadian Authors Association for the encouragement and development of Canadian verse. Annual subscription, $2.00; single copies, 50 cents. Verse published in the Magazine will be paid for at the rate of 1 cent a word. The Magazine shall have first publication rights only; the copyright will remain with the author. Verse published elsewhere will not be accepted for publication. If return of manuscript is desired, a stamped, addressed envelope must be enclosed. Only Canadian stamps are acceptable. Contributors from U.S.A. and other countries should use International (or Imperial) Reply Coupons. Individual criticism of verse submitted cannot be undertaken. Address, Business Manager, "Canadian Poetry Magazine", 677 Dundas St. West, Toronto, Canada.

Patrons of poetry are reminded that we pay for all poems printed, and are grateful for donations to defray the expense of this policy.

Manuscripts should be mailed to The Editor—P.O. Box 803, Postal Station "B"—Ottawa, Ontario.

FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to state that a magazine such as this is not a profit making venture: It is published by The Canadian Authors Association for the encouragement of poetry in Canada and its continued appearance is only made possible by the generosity of its Foundation Supporters. Once again we are indebted to our friends, listed below, for encouragement and practical support and we thank them most gratefully.

The Editor and The Management Committee

E. D. Arnold
Charlotte Boucher
L. W. Brockington
E. G. Burton
Burton's Limited
Leo Cox
Lady Eaton
Mrs. Garbutt
John Murray Gibbon
Dorothy M. Henderson
Amabel King
Olive Knox
Albert R. Korn
H. M. Mack
A. E. McBride
Gladstone Murray
The Ottawa Citizen
Mazo de la Roche
B. K. Sandwell
H. S. Southam
E. P. Taylor
Joy Tranter
Toronto Poetry Group, C.A.A.
Senator Cairine R. Wilson
Mrs. Yanda
Well Wisher

The Grolier Society of Canada Ltd.

IN MEMORY OF NELLIE McCLUNG

The Calgary Branch of the Canadian Authors Association has forwarded to the Foundation Fund the sum of Sixty Dollars, contributed by its members in memory of the late Nellie McClung, distinguished Canadian writer.

AUGUSTANA LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CONTENTS

The Green Street—*Mary Jane Lee*
Sugar Bush—*Arthur S. Bourinot*
There Will Be Grass—*Jed Garrick*
Supplication—*Mary Jane Lee*
Young Man at Church—*Kathryn Munro*
Cone Gathering—*Edna C. Hanson*
Kismet—*Patricia Collacott*
Questing Spirit—*Irene G. Dayton*
Earth Fire Water Air—*Tom Farley*
Forbearing—*Albert Ralph Korn*
A Dreamer in Moab—*Isobel McFadden*
El Alamein—*James A. M. Moir*
Emergence of Poetry—*E. I. Louch*
Woodcutter on the Mountain—*Girsha Gowing*
Fallen Oak—*Mary Grant Charles*
The April Medusa—*Charles Edward Eaton*
Ballerina—*Gilean Douglas*
April in Nova Scotia—*Nancy Heine*
Silver Thaw—*Sidney Bushell*
To Any Spring—*Myrtle Reynolds Adams*
Question Now—*Gilean Douglas*
To a Barberry Thicket—*Irene G. Dayton*
Prognosis—*George Walton*
When Winter Comes—*Clara Bernhardt*
Postscript—*Diana Skala*
Little Fires—*Hilda Ridley*
Co-Existence—*Rona Murray*
Big Day—*Raymond Hull*
Helen—*C. M. Hartley*
Walk Behind Her—*Joseph Joel Keith*
Telephone Wires—*Ruth Miller*
Dogwood at Summer's End—*Clara Hopper*
Shadows—*Jessie Drummond Boyd*
Autumn Days—*Arthur S. Bourinot*
The Guardian—*Robert Bradley*
After the Party—*Margaret Stanley-Wrench*
Travellers—*Lilian S. Auty*
The Nick of Time—*Fred Swayze*

Page
Book Reviews 30

The contents of this Quarterly are indexed in The Canadian Index, published by The Canadian Library Association.

SUPPLICATION

Run! Take up your dreams and run.
Take no heed of loved ones
Nor of sacred things.
Hear the distant calling . . .
Do you know that calling?
'Tis the cry of wandering bodies,
Wandering over conscious clay.
The fires of civilization burn low
And the ground untrod,
The mountain peak untouched,
The unconquered . . .
Touches a tremulous inner chord
And we must search blindly,
For our insatiate minds hunger
After dreams unfed.

Look eastward to the sea,
Mandalay, and wait for me.
Leave the castles standing,
Spain, and wait for me.

Oh God, just let me see,
Before time grows too old,
A sea so blue with sunlight
I cannot comprehend it,
But I shall know, oh God,
If I can only find it.
And there is a place
I cannot hope to find again,
For when I was a child I found it
And with age I lost it.
But perhaps . . .

Look eastward to the sea,
Mandalay, and wait for me.
Leave the castles standing,
Spain, and wait for me.

Mary Jane Lee

YOUNG MAN AT CHURCH

I went to church the other day
To hear, to worship, and to pray—
  A scarlet feather on a hat
  In front of me took care of that !

It smote the text to jumbled prose,
It waltzed around the curate's nose;
  It boogie-woogied on the boys
  Who sang of other-worldly joys.

When humbly we confessed our sins
It shimmied up the vicar's shins;
  And when he preached, how sad to say,
  The scarlet feather won the day !

I would have heard him, were I blind,
But could a fellow heed behind
  A feather on a maiden's hat
  That danced about in church like that?

Kathryn Munro

CONE GATHERING

The trees stood tall and silent
As I came into view,
In a benign amusement
To see what I would do.

I meekly stooped and gathered
The pine-cones, strange and brown;
A harmless small trespasser
In a grave ancient town.

No whisper broke the silence,
No sound or motion, save
My fumbling hands accepting
The gifts the tall trees gave.

Edna C. Hanson

KISMET

I sought you down the centuries
by Tiber Thames and Nile,
I dreamed of you and longed for you,
your touch your voice your smile.
I tarried long in Petra
in Babylon and Rome
and now the circle is complete;
in this my northland home
at last our paths have met and merged,
but what capricious fate
ordained most dear that I be born
too soon, and you too late.

Patricia Collacott

QUESTING SPIRIT

O, the wild, wild willow, burns silver
In the brain,
Leaves turn with force of rain,
I wander on and on,—
Half lost, submerged on a wordless plain.

Beyond this isolated realm,
This phantasmagoria,
The thunderhead coils its maddening shape,
Cumulous clouds
Swell to their nefarious state.

Out on the windy heath
Heather bells ring,
The wind is a mystic thing,
Demoniac shocks of rain
Soothe a paralyzed brain.

Irene G. Dayton

EARTH FIRE WATER AIR

Earth Fire Water Air
Comprise the love my heart finds fair.

Out of the earth a flower's reason
Pulses her veins; her winey season

Becomes her as cool water flows;
Everything flowers where she goes.

And since my heart's no different from
Sunseeking pomegranate or plum,

It will fly through fire or air,
Deep earth or watery thoroughfare,

And where it finds her it will know,
And where she blossoms it will grow,

And where we touch a living light
Will startle that black stallion Night

Whose nevering hooves drive all desire
Through Earth Water Air and Fire.

Tom Farley

FORBEARING

The unlocked door may hold for you, your share
Of all the riches that your heart would know.
Explore the regions which are deep with trees,
Where cooling forests shade the noonday glow.
And there reposing in a pleasant glen,
With charity, forgive the faults of men.

Albert Ralph Korn

A DREAMER IN MOAB

The radio drama from which the following excerpts were taken was produced on the night of December 27, 1951, from the C.B.C. Winnipeg Studios under the direction of James Kent. The setting is a Moabite tent about 1322 B.C. The room is ugly except for a bow of red mountain lilies blazing in a clay bowl. Orpah and her sister—a little girl of twelve are weaving.

MIRIAM: Look, Orpah,
Look through the square of our tent door
Toward the shining peaks.
The setting of the sun is just beginning
And the cliffs are on fire.

ORPAH: The only fragment of beauty, Miriam,
In all the land of Moab
That *she* cannot touch.

MIRIAM: There is the moonlight
That at its full
Changes the red cliffs to rose and silver.
And today there were flowers on the slopes!
See! I have put some in the curved bowl.

ORPAH: She will not let you keep them. *(Dreamily)*
How lovely it will be
In a country rich with honey,
Golden with ripening barley
And laden with grape vines.

MIRIAM: *(Eagerly)* What? Where?

ORPAH: To walk
Where simple things are made beautiful.
To live
Where hands like Naomi's
Touch even the noontides with loveliness.

MIRIAM: What are you saying, Orpah?
Shall we go to a new place? Is it far?
Will there be many flowers there
And a river?

ORPAH: Hush! I hear *her* steps on the clay without.

MIRIAM: *(Not heeding)* Will there be a river, Orpah?
With water that laughs over pebbles?
Will we pitch our tent by its bank
And listen while we spin?

MOTHER: *(Entering)* What crazed dream is this
Of waters that laugh. *(Laughs)*
Have I a foolish child as well as one who limps
For my youngest?

MIRIAM: Mother!

ORPAH: You have wounded her!

MOTHER: Here will our tent stand
Till the sun and the stars die.
Let not your brother, Zadak, hear these vain dreamings.

ORPAH: What harm are such dreams—if they be dreams—
More than the ugly images
With which the fermented wines taunt my brother
In the black hours before dawn?

ZADAK: What is that to you, woman?

ORPAH: Only that your ravings
Destroy my proper dreams.

MIRIAM: I am tired, Orpah. All day my hands have woven
The dull silver flax into a mat.

ORPAH: Put it aside, little sister,
And rest.
Watch the sunset's painted fingers
Withdraw the tawny fire from our valley
And from the cliffs of Moab.

MIRIAM: Those were pretty words you said—like gold and silver bells.
Did Ruth and Naomi tell their singing to you?

ORPAH: I do not know.
They were my own I thought.
But then—perhaps not.
I have no music in my tongue,
Have I?

* * * * * *

ORPAH: How dark is our valley
When the stars die.

RUTH: Dawn is on the peaks already
And the blackness shrinks downward on the slopes.
Be glad, Orpah! Be happy! Rejoice!
I am filled with rejoicing
Beginning a new life—with you and Naomi to share it!

ORPAH: My heart will lift soon—
Be glad at the thought of tomorrow
And tomorrow and tomorrow—
A thousand tomorrows
Brimming with beauty and lovingkindness.

NAOMI: Turn again, my daughters.
Why will ye go with me.
Turn again my daughters
And go your way.

Isobel McFadden

EL ALAMEIN

Star Track, Bottle Track, Hat Track . . . Go
Down again the tracks where no flowers grew;
But fantastic dust, churned into ramparts low,
And minefield wire, and petrol cans aglow,
—The sweetest signs the desert ever knew.

Safely in memory drive; no random shot
To interrupt your course of reverie.
The convoy grinds and lurches past the spot
Where nine white crosses stand; and there is not
A light on any of the lumbering ghosts to see.

Bombay Road . . . Moon Track . . . Pause
On the mile to battle, that tense, expectant mile;
The sky bursts open in a sudden rose
Of fire; the hollow wilderness knows
Conflict begun, and wading ranks of steel.

Star Track, Bottle Track, tracks without a name;
Moon Track, Boat Track—the ghost battalions trudge
From beyond the bounds of Egypt to the same
Line of demoniacal noise and flame,
Blazing from Himeimat to Miteriya Ridge.

The stench of desert night, the smell
Of cordite and carnage—O memory, why repeat
These best-forgotten things? But the proud will!
O remember the brave who breached that hell,
With jaunty heckle, and blue bayonet.

Jesting with death, indomitable men,
Greek, Pole, Australian, Londoner;
Banded together under one ensign,
Lighting the sands around El Alamein
With more than bomb rosette or mortar-flare.

Star Track, Moon Track, tracks without a name,
Remember, yes remember, the feet that once passed through
The feet of nations that carried into fame
That word for courage, that glorious name
El Alamein, where no flowers grew.

James A. M. Moir

EMERGENCE OF POETRY

Thin hand waiting on the thin brain; waiting
On the thin mind which yearns yet to be creating
Shot through with evanescent phrases pleasing
Shot through with words to weave into a poem
What shall I say to you, thin hand, thin-worn with thought?
Thin hand, lying idle, what shall I say to you?
Nothing, against voices saying nothing
—The average life-time of a pair of sheets
The relative merits of mutton, veal, and beef—
Nothing, against the radio obtruding
Filling my life against my will, excluding
Coyly tormenting thoughts, less surely struggling
Like a dying fly in autumn's hollow knocking
I sit here thoughtless, half-aware of all.
Let there be silence, that the wind be heard
For selfless recognition pleading now
That I be made aware of the brown year
Outside and cold, that lies beneath the night
Of gardens, long mature, and that I knew
And roses in the dark earth in the shade
Wild roses in the lane, and later bryony
Bright sea, beneath the cliff submissive
And timid sun, a winter evening softening.
Not of these shall you write, thin hand; not of these
They shall remain inviolate from the urge precluding praise
Now that my soul, unborn, and treasured in mortal weakness
Leaps in my body, becoming, in inspiration
In the convulsive orgasm of composition
In the compulsive agony of creation
You shall not write of discrete, particular beauty
But instead, and always, the idea of beauty.
Not until retrospect may brain be in abeyance
Only in retrospect is intellect transcended
Delight not atrophied in flash of new desire
When I look again on the god's defeated mind.

E. I. Louch

WOODCUTTER ON THE MOUNTAIN

He is at work up here in green geometry
Of spruce and fir
Where practised crack of axe
And appetite of saw
Bare cedar's naked core.

He is content up here
High in the clean and trembling air,
At peace
With newborn leaf,
Bud slipping sheath,
And stealthy twigtip creep of sap
Among the brittle tamarack.

Whenever he looks down
He sees his fields below
Wheat-sown and winter brown
Freed from their hem of snow.

He is content up here
To wait for Spring's green signature.

Girsha Gowing

FALLEN OAK

Let autumn have its way with the living!
crimson creep the maple branches,
orange climb the mountain ash;
But this tree lies where it has fallen,
full of years, across the brook,
to remind me of the man I've known:
An oak, though dead, has a grandeur of its own,
And there will come a day for crossing
the bridge this oak tree made for me.

Mary Grant Charles

THE APRIL MEDUSA

Past poise of blossoming, you walk in the garden with terrible eyes,
Obsessed with the possession of spring. Death's blanching shows
Upon the lilac, waste-purple of iris looks ready to close.
Why should you be gentle and willing when your dominion dies?

Why follow the figures that fled through the garden,
Swept like petals down spirals of air,
Girls with white dresses and gold-tossed hair?
Not one of them knew how to pause, to freeze, to harden.

Being beautiful, they followed beauty out of time and place.
Their catafalque itself was flowing light.
They did not hold nor were held in a fixity of sight—
Your memory, alone, is that spring ago, the wind-surge of petals,
the rain-blurred face.

Now, once more you ask of the garden what is your own,
Wringing in rage an answer from the bloom, the head, the hand;
Or you would hold them with a stare they do not understand,
And, unrelenting, like Medusa, look on flower and face of stone.

Charles Edward Eaton

BALLERINA

That premiere danseuse, the rain,
Toe-steps down the silver stair
Of cloud as though it wasn't there
And stops to give a practise swirl
Of skirts all platinum and pearl
Upon a mountain top, before
She swanflights to the valley floor
To dance a sky ballet that's worth
All the emeralds of earth.

Gilean Douglas

APRIL IN NOVA SCOTIA

The yard is like a scarred
And wrinkled face
The sun has lost itself
So far in outer space
Nothing is here
But the gray, the barren
And the unborn
And the slinking stray
At the bottom of the garden.

And what of these?
What voices sing
What poems
Are written
Murmuring
Of these?
Yet these things too
Are signs of Spring.

Nancy Heine

SILVER THAW

Day has awakened to a world transformed.
The naked trees of yesterday have donned
Dresses of silver, and the gray, dead grass
A-glitter with a thousand diamonds
Holds tiny rainbows in the rising sun.
In the still air, by its own beauty lulled
The morning sleeps. And now the mounting sun
Grown warmer, loosens from the lustred spruce
The icicles that falling one by one
Tinkle like fairy bells upon the crust.
And soon the woodpath will be carpeted
With shattered crystal, like some banquet hall
Littered with remnants of a carnival.

Sidney Bushell

TO ANY SPRING

Under what winter moon
Were you wrought?
From what heart's cry
Were you wrung,
Tender of eye?
On what far wish April blown?
Your crown of bloom
Woven by what half-need
On what joy-seasoned loom?

O long dreamed,
O green and white and gold,
Out of what loving and so loved,
Hope self-sprung,
By the heart half told,
Out of what light and laughter,
Living and longing,
What shimmer of springs gone by
Were you dreamed?
Out of what heart's cry?

Myrtle Reynolds Adams

QUESTION NOW

Perhaps the gull, white upon azure water,
Or the loon, voicing an ageless cry;
Or the dark goose, spurning the mad earth's halter,
May know a better end to why.

For my thought is lean as the lost hound running
A scent forlorn. Blood on the pads and sweat
Cold as the hill where a robot wind is pruning
The last wild trees of our last wild fierce regret.

Gilean Douglas

TO A BARBERRY THICKET SURROUNDING A GARDEN

Dew drenched thicket of barberry
Barring imposters from the garden,
The oasis is beyond you.

Here on the city street
There is no way to loveliness,
This dry haunt is not an Eden.

The pigeons pick and eat,
The sidewalk sapling dries with heat,
Footsteps hurry over concrete.

Barberry thicket hung with berry red
Roots wither
As jewels fall from your head.

Irene G. Dayton

PROGNOSIS

You said Love only counted, place and gold
Which others sought were but vain dross to you;
Yet all the while you were attentive to
Him only when with gifts his tale was told.
Love such as yours is less than harlots give!
And his, what none should lose or hope to win,
For it passed love and was besotted sin.
And you have lost it. Even his will to live

Is gone, quite gone, and he, by God, would die
If his thin ghost could in the offing stay
To witness your shrill anger and dismay
When you ransack his gutted treasury.
And this will come, and his ghost shall be there
Retributory in the choking air.

George Walton

WHEN WINTER COMES

I shall be glad
When these warm days are over.
There is an urgency here,
A sentient stirring of the night
When the voiceless crying without
And the voiceless crying within
Disturbs the heart, even as wind
Disturbs the pines.
It speaks of the unalterable,
The unattainable,
And flings a palpable cloak of discontent
Across the springtime and the summer
Of the senses.
I shall know relief when winter comes,
When the stillness and softness of snow
Silently smothers the sadness of summer.
Winter will surely be preferable
To this . . . this . . . this grasping
For the ungraspable.
In winter everything is frozen—
Even the heart.

Clara Bernhardt

POSTSCRIPT

Because in spite of all I hope again,
That somehow still our threads shall right again,
That yours streaming south and mine straggling north
Shall somehow form the warp and woof of the cloth again,
I cannot lay claim to the level strength of white death
But with every breath, knowing and unknowing,
I pile high the fire of life.

Diana Skala

LITTLE FIRES

In youth we ask for bonfires,
Fed by the fuel of ecstasy, passion,
To light our way.

In middle years we trim the ardent flames
To conform to the pattern of a hearth
At which we entertain selected friends;

But in old age we grow less pernickety,—
Thankful to warm our hands at little fires,
Grateful for any cheer they may afford.

Hilda Ridley

CO-EXISTENCE

Timelessness in time: midsummer hour
Embracing all the noons of sensuous
Delight which lie untroubled on the dreaming face
Of earth. Past and future merged into the grace
Of this eternal hour held within
The time consumed human hand. No flower
Altered, cricket clack, bird, beetle, spider,
Spider's web—only the beholder.

Only man, the beholder
Has changed, has greyed, grown older.
Only man, the beholder.

Centuries of minutes smother infant
Laughter, adolescent dream, and of all
There now remains the man, silent viewer
Of himself and his own past wild fever:
Squandering of golden days while the tall
Hour glass sifted sand. Yet in this instant
Hour, eternity, sorrowing man
Could see the child playing in the sun.

Rona Murray

BIG DAY

There's a line of patient women waiting dumbly at a door.
They have waited there an hour, they will wait an hour more.
With their lank and empty shopping-bags, their purses full and fat,
They're the first of fifty thousand, so put out the Welcome mat.
Tell it to the country, tell it to the town;
Blanks have got a bargain-sale. Prices coming down!

There's a sighing in the offices, "If only we could go!"
There's a whisper in the counting-house, "They put on quite a show."
There's a grumbling in the factory, "The wife is spending-mad."
There's a murmur of competitors, "Let's hope the weather's bad."
Send it through the ether; coax and sing and yell;
Blanks have got a bargain-sale. Bargains priced to sell!

There's a mother leaves her babies when she hears the joyful news,
And an oldster leaves his checkers, and a toper leaves his booze,
And the crowds pour off the buses, and the orders flood the mail,
And the telephones are ringing for the mammoth bargain-sale.
Paint it on the pavement, write it on the sky;
Blanks have got a bargain-sale. Everybody buy!

Eighty thousand little leaflets are delivered door to door,
Fifty banners and the kite-balloon are flying at the store;
For the deaf must hear, the stupid know, the blind be made to see,
It's the super-special, triple-value monthly jamboree.
Shout it from the housetops, tell it every way;
Blanks have got a bargain-sale. Bargain-sale today!

Raymond Hull

HELEN

This is her friendship;
A seaport wind whipping an inland street,
Shocking its sun-drenched dawdlers into resentment,
Laughter-fused.

And this her friendship too;
A shared, insistent, gamin gaiety,
Twin to the prescience of woe,
Yet, as the lusty firstborn, claiming precedence.
Her friendship is a storm lamp, swinging,
A code of service, solemnly acknowledged, while the inner
Source from which it springs, is laughingly disavowed.
These things are Helen's friendship, and
Their symbol lies in lean hands cupped in endless giving.

C. M. Hartley

WALK BEHIND HER

Follow her. No, don't call.
Let the child go.
Stay in the shadows. Walk
behind her, so
she will be left alone
to wonder, and grow.

Listen to her; be still,
still as a hush.
Do not disturb her there
beyond the bush;
step over small dry leaves
that you might crush.

Wait for her. She will come,
and you will hear
marvelous truths of a far
new hemisphere,
far as another world—
far, and near.

Joseph Joel Keith

TELEPHONE WIRES

Child in the long grass, hearing the singing wires,
As the wind winds a skein of chords, and veers.
Ear to the pole she stands—wind in her listening face,
Hearing the song-thrum throbbing against her ears.

Child in the long grass, clings to the blackened pole,
Shaken, she feels her fingertips shake like breath.
Throbbing, she feels her eardrums throb to the sound
Of voices that speak of grocers, and cash, and death . . .

Child in the long grass, knowing naught of this,
Thinks that the wind spoke, for her private bliss . . .

Ruth Miller

DOGWOOD AT SUMMER'S END

Dogwood tree at my window,
Gemmed with the scarlet fruits of yesterday,
Tipped with the pert green buds
Of a bridal and beautiful tomorrow,
With the ivory sepals and yellow multi-petals of today.
Long looking with loving eye
Deciphered your varicoloured summary:
To look on you is to stand on a height
And gaze upon a winding road;
To look on you is to perceive past, present, and future
All one, co-existent . . .

Oh, most lovely of the trees of the littoral,
You drain the earthly dream
Of time and space,
Leaving the only reality:
Eternity.

Clara Hopper

SHADOWS

The wind—
The wind is crying
To a spectral moon,
The flame of autumn dying
In the shadow-haunted night.
Like passing ghosts
The singing birds have left us,
All are flown.

The night is shadow-haunted
With the unseen and unknown.

Jessie Drummond Boyd

AUTUMN DAYS

Rich days of autumn when the goldsmith sun
Spills his great cauldron on the forest floor
And trees stand almost bare, the leaves they bore
Worked in a magic carpet frost has spun.
The earth, like some tired athlete who has won
His race, turns to its rest, for winter's door
Will soon be opened wide and loud the roar
Of its wild winds with icy blasts begun.

And man now has surcease from summer's labour,
Of wearying days of ploughing and of hoeing,
His barns are full, his bins are overflowing,
There's time to stop and gossip with a neighbour.
The hard wood's piled, the pine knots stored for tinder,
A man can stretch his legs with none to hinder.

Arthur S. Bourinot

THE GUARDIAN

Often we have paused to watch the wind running
About the blonde heads of our ripening grain.
And we have heard his call on dark nights,
Wooing the shadows that dream about our chimneys.
Or felt, as we stood upon our prairie hills
The touch of his enquiring fingers on our faces.
And yet we have not tried to bind our friend,
Nor have we left unanswered his voice
As it called to us in darkness, nor yet
Have we stopped his inquisitive fingers from our faces.

For we are those who see the wind as guardian of our freedom;
And even in the silent stillness of the dawn
The whispering leaves remind us that he stands his watch, and we
Must try to shape our vigilance as closely as the wind.

Robert Bradley

AFTER THE PARTY

The room was full of smoke, and the sound of voices
Winding in and out like little cats
Insinuating, stretching out slate-blue claws,
And sometimes pleading or silken. Curtains were drawn,
And no one knew the snow was falling, falling,
Until, all over, the opened door let in
The smell of cold, fresh as a bunch of flowers,
And the sparkling darkness, and the white plush stillness.

This way and that they left, and only their footprints.
Made marks, cut keyholes in the thick, crisp snow,
And in the house only the husks of ash,
A smell of smoke, and wood warm still with hands
Remained. In loose, large plumes, falling, the snow
Returned, sifting, drifting, seeping, night long,
And now there was no trace, no keyhole print,
No scuffle of stick, no sign where they turned to wave.

We, too, shall go, making clear tracks from the door,
Guests, leaving a memory warm inside the house,
With the sharp friendship of flame from open fires,
And talk, bright, silken, or bitter, but living still,
And then the snow, scentless blossom of winter,
To cover and annul where we have been.

Margaret Stanley-Wrench

TRAVELLERS

Trains—
carrying passengers to one destination.
Here these strangers touch without meeting.
At the sign of greeting
they draw within themselves like turtles.
Their faces, like locked boxes,
register nothing of their being.

Phlegmatically
they sleep, read,
or dully gaze into space,
while the even rhythm of the wheels
signal onward, onward, on;
on, to those holding the key to their shut faces;
on, to homes, where loving children
with their mothers, wait;
to friends, holidays, business,
or may be on to tragedy.

All await something;
something to return them back to life,
when the mask will drop away
and life will continue.
Meanwhile, the passengers,
airtight as the train itself,
remain a secret.

Lilian S. Auty

THE NICK OF TIME

Crows always know the nick of time,
Sentinel-warned, to wing away
Shouting derisive scorn at the stranger.

Crows know the thaws of February
And herald the spring with raucous cawing.
They know the freshly crumbling earth
That covers the newly planted corn.
They know the onflow of cool night air
Silently flooding the summer fields,
And make wing to the rooky wood to drowse
The dark hours through in the murmuring pines.

Crows know all things. Their shrewd bright eyes
Glance sardonic as they strop their beaks
And preen their hard black quills awry
From hurried flight when beset and harried
By the frantic darting of distracted finches.
Crows know the rabbit crushed on the highway,
The great cage of ribs and sprawled bones of
Carrion clean picked and left to bleach.

Crows do not know, some unlucky hour,
The stealthy stalk of farmer boy,
Shotgun glinting steel-hot sun.
Surprised by death, they plummet to earth.
Having known all, they lose all; and lie,
Pitiful-brave handfuls of black.

Fred Swayze

E. J. Pratt's

VERSE-PANORAMA OF THE BUILDING OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY

Towards The Last Spike

It was inevitable that, sooner or later, the epic theme of the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway would challenge Canadian poets. It was almost as inevitable that the ringing response to the challenge should come from E. J. Pratt, whose major narrative poems assure his high and permanent place in Canadian literature. A leading critic has said of *Towards the Last Spike:* "It is a happy fusion of all the best in Ned's previous poetry—his humour, his narrative power and skill, and his playful intellectualism."

To be published in April. Probably $2.50

MACMILLAN

Books on two great poets...

The Infinite Moment And Other Studies in Robert Browning

By W. O. Raymond. With freshness of style and vigour of outlook a distinguished Browning scholar discusses the main elements of Browning's thought, fundamental problems in his biography, and his ultimate worth. "The book represents the sum of Professor Raymond's contribution to the study of Browning, and as such cannot fail to command respect."—*Times Literary Supplement.* $4.00.

Keats: A Bibliography and Reference Guide with an Essay on Keats' Reputation

By J. R. MacGillivray. This volume provides a catalogue of Keats' published writings in their many editions, and the significant books and articles about him and his poetry from 1816 to 1946, which reveal a revolution in literary values. The Introduction is the most extensive historical study yet published of the development of Keats' literary fame. $5.00.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS

Book Reviews

SELECTED POEMS by Gilbert Thomas—George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London—7s. 6d.

This prominent man-of-letters is probably most widely known for his biographies:—JOHN MASEFIELD in the Modern Writers Series, and WILLIAM COWPER AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY which is regarded as a *standard*. His own interesting autobiography attracted much attention as did his many volumes of essays and his one highly contrasting volume of general interest, PADDINGTON TO SEAGOOD: THE STORY OF A MODEL RAILWAY. SELECTED POEMS, which represents collections which have appeared during the past forty years and are now out of print, includes many recent poems as well. While not marked by any highly original quality of either thought or form, they do bear the mark of the craftsman's polished touch and reveal the poet's keen observation of nature, his sincere interest in humanity, and a sane and modern philosophy. The first poem in the book, "BIRDS OF PASSAGE", might be called *typical*. Visions of men are compared to "Like swallows in a shadowy minster square"; and he begs the "elusive messengers" to return—"That moment's dream of light beyond our own". In form it is a sonnet,—one of many sonnets fulfilling what Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch spoke of as "a lovely form to fit and hold lovely thoughts". "THOMAS HARDY", another sonnet, is a striking tribute to that great novelist and poet. "I AM OLD" is a fine example of many charming lyrics. Although the title recalls at once a well-known poem of Yeats, no reader could lightly dismiss the haunting lines by Mr. Thomas. "FIXED STARS", another sonnet, exemplifies the mingling of the new and old in his poetry. The sextet is as follows:

"Each generation, seeking larger gains,
With its new science the unknown must dare;
Yet doomed in any venture that disdains
The sovereignty of Work and Love and Prayer.
The waters widen. Over all remains
An ageless sky; and the fixed stars are there."

Elsie Pomeroy

THREE RYERSON CHAP BOOKS

CITY HALL STREET by Raymond Souster, EAST COAST by Elizabeth Brewster and SILVER SHADOWS by Theresa E. Thomson—The Ryerson Press, Toronto.

The note of social consciousness, with which readers have come to associate the poetry of Raymond Souster, is present in certain poems in the new volume, but in a somewhat milder form. There are other poems which readers may probably consider more memorable. "LAMPTON RIDING WOODS", which except for a few lines of protest, is a delightful lyric of childhood joys in the country. "A DREAM OF HANLAN'S: SOUTHERN ENGLAND" expresses the poet's nostalgic yearning, not for childhood days, but for the years they represent,—the years before any world war.

"PRAISE OF LONELINESS" is another striking lyric, weakened by a jarring final line. The work of Elizabeth Brewster has appeared in leading poetry magazines but "EAST COAST" is her first collection. The title-poem and "LONDON FOG" reveal the poet's mastery of the highly descriptive passage while quite as striking is her genius for the sharply etched portrait as exemplified in "PAPER FLOWERS", "JAMIE", and "ANNA". There are also several satisfying lyrics including the highly original "PEACE". The title, "SILVER SHADOWS", suggest the music and the delicacy of thought and phrase which mark the collection as a whole. Such poems as "A STREET LAMP IN WINTER", "NIGHT", and "EARTH LIKE A TIRED CHILD" exemplify the poet's power of delicate description and the unusual simile. "DAY IS NOT OLD" also belongs to this group but with the added philosophic note in the last line, while to the writer there was none more charming than "A WINDOW IN MAYTIME" whose form is only superficially modern.

Elsie Pomeroy

COUNTERPOINT TO SLEEP—Anne Wilkinson—First Statement Press—36 pp., $1.00.

HORIZONTAL WORLD—Thomas Saunders—Ryerson Press—41 pp., $2.25.

HOW SMOKE GETS INTO THE AIR—Terence Heywood—Fortune Press, London, England—25 pp., 5s.

REACH FOR A STAR—Blanche Muirhead Howard—Ryerson Press—10 pp., 50 cents.

Anne Wilkinson's poetry sparkles. And not with a mere surface glitter of bright words, but with the brightness of a wine possessing body and flavor. Inventiveness of thought, as well as of phrasing and rhythm, create an appetite that is far from satiated by the less than two dozen pieces included in this first collection.

Among half a dozen of these it is hard to select a best, but I derive greatest satisfaction from "WINTER SKETCH, ROCKCLIFFE, OTTAWA"—as admirable a snow piece as any Canadian poet has yet achieved. A sample can only suggest its quality:

> "Behind the plough the cold air flies a spume
> As soft and adamant as swans
> Where snow's vocation is to etherize
> The wood and choke the town's
> Hard arteries with drifts of chloroform.
> And all the long excessive day the ploughman
> Steers his dreaming over the hill
> To the faraway hour that carries his frostbite home."

"WINTER SKETCH" is a picture poem, but far more than a picture. Just as "A FOLK TALE" is more than a fable. The minor flaw I find in this ironic chronicle of lovers eternally trapped in a frustration of their own choosing is the over-quotability of the closing line, "On the home sweet hearth of hell".

Unlike any other complete piece in the collection, "THE FOLK TALE" echoes in theme (not in form) a distinguished modern poem—John Crowe Ransom's "EQUILIBRISTS". But perhaps it echoes it to my ear only.

Which brings us to the shortcomings of Anne Wilkinson's poetry—and its qualities are of too rare an order to pass them by. Its emotional range is, at this stage, restricted, and its intellectual approach on occasion verges toward the commonplace (as in "LORD RANDALL, MY SON"). Influences are obvious, as in the Hopkinish lines,

> "What hubbub in the meadow, cock a doodle dawn
> When skulls ablaze with golden flowers—"

which are typical of a scattered score.

But the faults are few; the excellencies ,many; the general effect, one of artistic achievement.

Thomas Saunders is a story-teller, rather than a poet. If he had presented the melodramatic "ARMAND", and such character sketches as "THE DENTIST" and "PRAIRIE WIFE" in prose form, they might have proved valuable contributions to the literature of the Canadian west. But he has chosen to present them in Frostian verse that lacks the intricacies of Frost intellect and Frost rhythm. Only in half a dozen epigrammatic verses, of which "EVAN JAMES" is typical, does he approach poetry.

Few readers, I imagine, will have the patience to follow the thin vein of poetry that runs through "HOW SMOKE GETS INTO THE AIR" to the rare deposits that are more than a line or two in depth. Frankly, I found the returns not worth the effort, and was discouraged from any prolonged attempt to decipher the significance of Mr. Heywood's work by pages close-packed with such hard rock as:

> "richinamoment bursting for the bursts
> of newer splitsails snipt before all-life."

One is uncomfortably conscious of straining after effect in the poetic treatment accorded simple thoughts throughout "REACH FOR A STAR". For example,

> "The strong may not embrace the weak
> With their strength,
> For the weak are not aware
> Of their weakness."

suggests insincerity, rather than the sophistication apparently aimed at. The impression is of an attempt to make bricks with perilously little straw. Miss Howard is most nearly successful when she reaches for an epigram, rather than a star.

Goodridge Macdonald

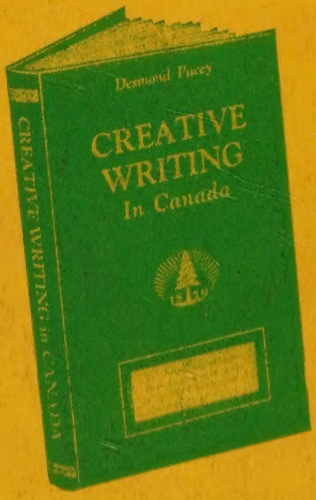
New Books

THE ROCKING CHAIR AND OTHER POEMS

By A. M. Klein. Just off the press. Second edition (re-illustrated) of this outstanding book of poetry which won the Governor-General's Award in 1948. With 20 distinguished illustrations by Thoreau MacDonald. $3.00.

CREATIVE WRITING IN CANADA

By Desmond Pacey. Here is the first history of Canadian literature to be published in twenty-five years. It discusses chiefly poetry, fiction, humour and *belles lettres*. Because of Dr. Pacey's stimulating approach, this is a particularly valuable book for all authors. $4.00.



Recent Ryerson Poetry Chap-Books

THE SEARCHING IMAGE

By Louis Dudek. The author is a native Montrealer, who took his Ph.D. in English Literature at Columbia University, New York. He is now teaching at McGill University. $1.00.

IT WAS A PLANE

By Tom Farley. Born in Lloydminster, Saskatchewan, the author joined the R.C.A.F. in 1941. He is today a director in the National Film Board's Newsreel Unit, Ottawa. $1.00.

MINT AND WILLOW

By Ruth Cleaves Hazelton. A native of Annapolis County, N.S., Mrs. Hazelton, after living in the United States for many years, has recently moved to Niagara Falls, Ontario. $1.00.

VIEWPOINT

By Myra Lazechko-Haas. The author's name is prominent in all Ukrainian-Canadian circles. She is literary editor of *Opinion* (Winnipeg) and *New Canadian Poetry Column* (Toronto). $1.00.

The Ryerson Press ***Publishers, Toronto***